

REMARKS

Upon a PAMPHLET written by the

Rev. Mr. *CALEB FLEMING*,

In a LETTER of ADMONITION to the

Rev. Mr. *SAMUEL PIKE, &c.*

ENTITLED

NO PROTESTANT POPERY.

WITH SOME

STRICTURES upon the REMARKABLES

In Mr. *FLEMING's*

SCALE of FIRST PRINCIPLES.

Addressed to the REVEREND

The DOCTORS of the *SORBONNE*.

By *JOHN DOVE*.

Let me be weighed in an even ballance, Job xxxi. 6.

Thou art weighed in the ballances, and art found wanting.
Dan. vi. 7.

L O N D O N:

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To the REVEREND

The Doctors of the SORBONNE.

Reverend Fathers!

I Could not think of any so proper to patronize a piece of this sort, as you; for besides your patronage, I indulge the hope of a solution to some emphatical truths involved in questions, which have been put to the dignitaries of our own nation, in vain. I am not reproaching my country by this; for there are in it, that are more intelligent than his holiness, assisted with all his cardinals. We have those among us who are judges of the fit, and the unfit; their various modes and relations, as if they had been of the original council, when the frame of the world was determined. My doubt of their dogma's is the reason of my appeal to you; for it is presumed, if the fundamentals of nature, her operations, and the institutions of heaven, be unalterable and uniform, this fitness and unfitness must be so too: Yet in this variable northern climate we find they are not, but as eels from our fingers, they slip from our understandings, and we have only been grasping at phantoms. This fitness among us is sometimes this, then that;

in an instant it is neither this nor that, but something else, any thing or nothing at all, as best suits the caprice of the orator: yet have they exploded all mysteries, inconceivables, and incomprehensibles, excepting those of their own framing, out of their scale; wherefore one would naturally expect nothing from them, but what is as plain as a polished truncheon; notwithstanding we find now and then some metaphysical knots, which they cannot untye: such for instance, as the eternal nature and reason of things being a law to the Almighty; and that they were so, independent of, and prior to, his will. We frequently hear also, of a supreme God; it is presumed he must be the Jove, the Jupiter of the heathens, for it is neither scripture language, nor a scripture idea, nor the doctrine of your church. They are so uncivil, they will not tell us who his subordinates are, nor what kind of beings; how they sprang into existence, whether they are made or unmade, compound or simple beings, legates, agents, self-motive, or moved: they will neither tell us their nature nor their offices, nor give us any comprehensible account of them. Repentance has, they say, a supreme energy too, an obligatory force upon their supreme God, to placate him. Now those are as incomprehensible doctrines to me, as that of a triune God, and of a divine person being incarnate; quite as inconceivable as that of transubstantiation. I have snuffed helebore, TOPT my candle*, rubbed my

* A phrase peculiar to taylors for snuffing them.

my eyes, and waited with great attention, and expected that as these and many more mysteries were of their own framing, they would have condescended to explain them; but to as little purpose, as it would be to attend a covey of owls for a lecture of optics: And tho' we have gentlemen of real learning and impartiality, perfectly able to settle these matters, their want of number obliges me to call in a foreign aid: in this situation, I address you. Tell them, reverend Fathers, it is unreasonable to taunt us with what they call mysteries in revelation, while they preach, and expect us implicitly to believe, those profundities of their own devising; that they ought not to cajole us blindly and without evidence to yield our understanding to them, to believe their wild imaginations, and to shut our eyes against the evidence given by the Almighty God, and to reject his truth to please them; reprimand them for it: And since they will not tell us, how a learned conjecture, or a random guess, reasoned upon, differs from the visions in the spirit of the hat †, we hope you will; and that you will enable us distinctly to conceive between this method of reasoning, and the wildest reveries of a distempered brain; and whether they are not both imaginative: the one springing from an imaginary intuitive power in the soul, the other from an imaginary inflatus, mistaken by enthusiasts and madmen for a divine dictate; and whether they are not spokes of the same wheel, meeting in the same nave.

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† A foolish enthusiastic quaker's pamphlet.

We had some time ago a new whole duty of man published ; that was succeeded by a new practice of piety : at last we are presented with a new christianity, compounded of Alexander Ross's lumber. Dear Fathers, tell us, what ailed the old ? What was its defect ? It stood the test of near six thousand years, ere any man had the audaciousness to explode it quite, and give us an entire new pattern : but in this a late set of men have outdone the Heathens, and boldly attempted it. Our author is one of their understrappers, and would bully us into the use of this new-fangled stuff ; he pours in a broadside upon us, and hopes we will take it for a kindly salute. Venerable Fathers, this is incomprehensibly intolerable. What ! to beat and mock us at the same time ! We cry to you for redress : if you refuse us, and there is none to be had, we will complain to papa at Rome, where his holiness will take cognizance of you, and compassion upon us. For these gentlemen, you must know, reverend Fathers, are for setting aside all establishments in religion at once, without giving us any security that they will not play the same trick in politics, when they have power ; and if they should take it into their heads to treat our statute laws, as they have the statutes of heaven, (and who will be answerable they will not ?) what a condition are we in then ! They affirm the reason of each individual man is quite sufficient to be his sole guide, through this world to the next ; that his duty cannot be made plainer to him by any man, or set of men ; that morality is the means
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and the way to heaven : and as all our statute laws are moral laws, founded and made because of the depravity of man ; and since they have freed him from his depravity, rendered him innocent, and made him perfect, what need have we of any law ? what fools were they that made them ? and what have we to do but to get rid of those political shackles, those incumbrances, and demolish them ? They only want power you see, for the train is laid and their matches ready for lighting. As little as they think of their present treatment of revelation, the above consequences are not only like to follow, but infallibly will follow upon their plan. I wish I had no corroborating instances to produce here——but sure as they live, this will be the effect of their libertinism. They shall not here tax me with mistaking civil establishments for revelation, or with confounding them ; they are vergers upon that themselves, or they had not adopted or allowed a scale of first principles, not to be found in the scriptures. You have, reverend Fathers, seen the gradations of slavery, the incroachments on liberty, the ugly wooden shoe, and the iron yoke : say, did you ever know slavery introduced upon any people upon earth, from the beginning of time to this day, till they had abused and trampled upon the revelation of God ? and when, and where, that has been thrust out, has not slavery infallibly followed ? and does not the present state of the world manifest this ? They ring a senseless peal in our ears, about common sense ; I have no other kind of sense but that, and that convinces

convinces me that they are destitute of it. The bible has nothing but common sense in it, which is the reason they cannot understand it. Common sense consists in conceiving of the works of God in the natural world, as they are simply presented to us, to our common senses. The bible is an appeal to our common sense, a referring us to the natural and sensible world for our ideas, that thereby we may obtain ideas of the spiritual world. Our soph's with all their stock of uncommon sense, never understood this plain, natural, first principle, by which all intelligence is conveyed to the mind; therefore when they come to explain their own mysteries, they treat us with a whirl of words, instead of illustrations. The Patriarchs, Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, teach by natural and sensible things to understand spiritual ones, and no otherwise: nor is there a chapter in the bible, but is filled with natural and sensible images, nor can the spiritual be understood till the natural are: the whole bible is an illustration of this, and till the objects referred to there, are understood, it is impossible the ideas designed to be conveyed by those objects, should; and nothing but want of common sense prevents their seeing this. If they wrangle here, when they can produce one metaphysical sentence out of the scriptures, that shall decide the point; and if they will not or cannot do that, I am afraid they must fall under censure, for want of common honesty, as well as want of common sense: they must wink hard here or be convinced. It was the want of this sort of common sense made

Ifgrim, in the fable, look for the price of the foal in the mare's hind-foot, and get a kick on the head for his peeping. Yet they assume the prerogative of directors. But, marvellous to tell! as mountain behind mountain, their mysteries rise to our view, and discourage our ascent; while they prompt their credulous dupes to believe their reason has rifled the secret archives of eternity: when we come to examine them and their speculations, we find them no more eagles than Sancho, and their fancies like his flights in the blanket; and quite as short of the skies. To hear them, one would think they had conversed with Lucian's Menippus, or with Jove himself. Ask them, Reverend Fathers, since the earth yields, besides her subterranean treasure, corn, hay, timber, aromatics, &c. beyond all computation, by what strange power doth her womb conceive? by what strength doth she bring forth this offspring? what were the present year's productions one thousand years ago, and what will they be one thousand years hence? bid them run over the alphabet of nature, and think on all the generations past, anticipate those in future, say what is become of the former, and from whence will the latter spring: bid them view the daily scenes of nature, her pageantry of clouds, meteors, &c. and tell us what is their origin, and where is their grave: and let them lead us to the magazine of nature, to her estrado, where she sits in her solemnities, and dispenses her donations, and tell us the place where nature works not. Shades and darkness may obscure the day; sleep and languor may weaken the powers of the

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mind;

mind; frost and cold may stagnate, or winds may blast, vegetation; but nature sleeps not, but is still alive and operative, where we think her dead. Let them conceive the place where she is idle, or tell us how she operates; or, if they cannot run with footmen, let them not contend with horses: and if in the land of peace (reason) wherein they trusted, they are wearied, ask them what they will do in the swellings of Jordan, or rather in an immense ocean, without a pilot? Perhaps they may receive these queries from you, and do what they never did, think. Tell them, for ye have penetration and are equal to the task, what the right of private judgment is; whether it be not, in its modern use, a cant word, meaning at the bottom a liberty to be as wicked as we please, to burlesque whatsoever we choose not to understand. I am convinced as much as any one, that each man has a right to think for himself: but my doubt is, whether we have a right to fly in the face of authority, or to publish what controuls the natural sense of any words, in the revelation of God, and the clear reason of the soul founded thereon, by ignorantly starting out with a fiction against it; and whether, since I am punishable for treason devised and published against a temporal king, I have a right to impunity, in publishing treason against the eternal King of Kings? I have met with very few, but would take more liberty than they would give; this makes it doubtful, if there be not a delicacy in this affair, which our libertines have not attended to. They plead for liberty to publish their impious and crude conceptions: but
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lose their temper, when revelation or reason is proposed to them, without knowing the evidence of the former, or being able to distinguish their own devices from the latter. No doubt, but a dog with a stone tied to his tail has the right of private judgment, and to run to get rid of the intanglement: but if he were rational, he would certainly know he had no right to offend our ears with his howle, nor to break our shins with the random jerks he gives the stone. He runs for liberty, till he is out of breath, and in a fever; grows mad, and gets himself into the halter. This career is the fruit of his free-thinking. We have a right to think for ourselves; nor has any man a right to hinder us: this right commences as early as we begin to think; yet we suffer many inconveniencies for it, as we grow up; for we are oftener corrected for thinking for ourselves, than for not thinking at all. Adam thought for himself, when he transgressed. A certain sea-officer, no doubt, thought for himself in the Mediteranean: but he had avoided his guilt, and we had suffered no damage, had he followed his master's thoughts. I am for every man's thinking for himself: but let him keep to himself all that is mischievous; don't let him annoy his fellow-creatures, nor alienate the hearts of the king's good subjects, by proclaiming his treason and rebellion: for that is an overt-act, whereby his neighbours and his country receive hurt. There is certainly no persecution in restraint here; therefore, dear Fathers, if the advocates for private judgment blame me, tell them, they condemn themselves, unless they have monopolized the babbling

babbling and scribbling trades. If they mean by private judgment, an unrestrained liberty; then I am upon their principles innocent: upon my own indeed they may censure: for I say private judgment ceases to be so, when it is published. A prince's private judgment may be for war: but when he proclaims it, it becomes a public concern; private judgment in private life is similar to this. If they from hence insinuate, that I am a bigot, and an enemy to liberty, tell them they ***, and that I never oppress'd any man in my life: or if they wry their mouths at the tartness of my sauce, convince them that Mr. Fleming's mess was so rank, it was indigestible without it. In this, Reverend Fathers, I doubt not but you will believe me; and though I am not of your communion, nor ever shall be, yet you stand infinitely higher in my esteem, than the self-sufficients I have been disciplining in this performance: for I will not stain the character of a christian papist, by putting a protestant infidel in competition with him. Therefore, when I have wished your salvation, and your disentanglement from every obstacle in the way of it, and an unreserved conformity to revealed real christianity, I am, Reverend Fathers,

Your most humble Servant,

JOHN DOVE.

REMARKS, &c.

TO hear men blame others for faults which they indulge in themselves, as it bespeaks a partial spirit, so it does a prodigious degree of want of understanding and of common honesty. I am extremely sorry that this is chargeable upon Mr. Caleb Fleming, in his rude attack upon Mr. Samuel Pike and his five Reverend Fathers.—He charges them with copying from the gospel system, the phrase ‘ A form of found words, 2 Tim. iii. 13 ;’ and says, that title ‘ is no way worthy of, or suitable to, a system of merely human opinion and interpretation.’ And asks, ‘ if their recommendation has not the air of being apostolic? and would they not affix to this catechism (the assembly’s) the idea of a sacred divine book, a system of infallible truth, or of pure undiluted scripture-doctrine?’ He is very angry with those five Fathers for not ‘ considering it as a calvinistic system; and for recommending it to any besides calvinistic families;’ and concludes, the good old gentlemen were nodding under the soporific prejudice; and with a few more ill-natured things dismisses them. ‘ But who art thou, O man, that judgest another, and doest the same things, Rom. ii. 1.”—For surely every charge brought against Mr. Pike and his five Soporifics, in point of behaviour, lies with a vengeance against Mr. Fleming himself. The title of a former book of his own, is ‘ A scale of first principles, religious and moral, proper

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‘ proper for the life and sentiment of man ; chiefly
 ‘ calculated for the service of youth : design’d upon
 ‘ the model of Dr. Worthington’s Form of sound
 ‘ words.’

Why should it be a greater crime in the five soporific Noddies (as Mr. Fleming calls them in contempt) to call the assembly’s catechism a form of sound words, more than in Mr. Fleming to allow the same expression in Dr. Worthington ? Why may not they assume the apostolic air as well as Mr. Fleming ? His title above has, it is presumed, more than the apostolic air : but it unluckily happens, instead of a scale of first principles, the book is a huddle of crude conclusions ; not religious and moral, but impudent and prophane ; not proper for the life and sentiment of man, nor calculated for the service of youth ; but for the contamination of their minds, by leading them off from the revelation of God, &c. nor is it a matter of any importance, what model it was design’d upon, since the imitation is neither rational nor divine : but more of this by and by.

Mr. Fleming promises to conduct his examination, and to risque the merits of what he has to offer, upon the following protestant principles, *viz.*

‘ Divine truth, or the known will of God, is the only rule on which a man is able to construct and form his religious character.’ It would have been extremely kind to have illuminated our minds here, or to have told us how we are to come at this divine truth or will of God : for without that, the proposition is vague and impertinent. But provided the reader will but avoid Mr. Pike and his five Soporifics, he may ramble to Rome or to Mecca, &c. for any care Mr. Fleming has taken : for his next proposition, instead of preventing this ramble, has equipp’d him for it.

‘ Christians

* Christians who acknowledge the new testament
 * to be a compleat revelation of the will of God, can-
 * not remove that standard of truth from where it is.*

I would ask the oraculous Mr. Fleming, what the christian must do who does not acknowledge this? for I am one of them. If Mr. Fleming has not here exploded the old testament, I don't understand him; when he has dropt the old testament, I ask, by what tenure he will hold the new; and affirm that there is no christian, who has either sense or learning, that will undertake to uphold the one without the other; they must stand and fall together: and if Mr. Fleming knows not this, he has vastly more stupidity than he imputes to Mr. Pike and the Soporifics, and is perfectly unqualified to be an author, or teacher; as perfectly ignorant of the plan of revelation, as a Portugeze parrot is of the English grammar. They, (the two testaments) mutually support each other, and contain a chain of principles, devised by the infinite wisdom of God, to be the directory of the rational creature, who had lost his way, and had for ever wandered in darkness, if life and immortality had not been brought to light by the gospel, by the revelation of God to the first man*. How far Mr. Fleming may be privileged above the rest of his fellow-creatures, to set aside any part of this revelation, to make way for his rational scheme, his imagination, his dream, I will not take upon me to say: perhaps he can give himself a dispensation, as the quakers do; but sure I am, no other man has this liberty. God has given us a revelation; and at our peril we diminish, corrupt, or depart from it. 'Tis the crime of a traitor, similar to the officer of a king counterfeiting or falsifying his master's orders; which, I think, in secular policy, and upon the strictest protestant principles, is high treason.

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* 2 Tim. i. 10.

Luke i. 70.

Therefore it is very extraordinary to find such a flood of wrath, of insolence and rude rage, poured forth at Mr. Pike, page 11, for saying ‘ whosoever thus diminishes the sacred canon, by setting aside, at his own pleasure, any part of revelation belonging to the standard of truth, is accountable for it to God, and deserves to be ranked by man among deists and infidels.’ This is as sound a protestant principle as any in the protestant world; and the moment we depart from it, we go back to Rome, or commence infidels. And since Mr. Fleming claims indulgence here, I want to know how he will exculpate himself from the imputation of having adopted the first principle in the deists scale. Infidelity begins by nibbling at the old testament; first exploding one part, then another, till they have got rid of the new and all*. It is a pity, Mr. Fleming has not the courage to throw off the mask, or, if he be not a deist, to tell us what he is: for if he be a christian, he is such an one as I never heard of in my life. His wrath burns here, because his Scale of principles is glanc’d at, *i. e.* because his propagating heathenism is not quietly connived at; that he cannot crush the bones of every one that dares to support the canon of scripture and the manifest doctrines of it; that he cannot extirpate them, and introduce his own wild imaginations, the reveries of his brain, the cobwebs of his own spinning; sad, indeed! persecution, no doubt! On the paragraph above, our meek author loses his temper. ‘ But hark you, Mr. Pike,—Why this air of impotent authority? what, and who are you? a little insignificant mortal, that would assume the air of judicial majesty, &c.’ He goes on ranting and raving, bids defiance to all opposition to his Scale, sneers at the Westminster catechism, smells brimstone on the match to light the pile of faggots, imputes a meaning to Mr. Pike, quite contrary to the sense of his words, &c. the recapitulation here is an answer. His

* John v. 46, 47.

His next propositions are, ‘ All christians are
 ‘ equally concerned in that rule ; therefore all have
 ‘ sufficient abilities to understand and apply it.

‘ The sense which every individual christian is
 ‘ able to form of this rule, is all the capacity he
 ‘ has, or, can possibly have of its use and impor-
 ‘ tance ; so that as none other can naturally see or
 ‘ feel for him, so none other can spiritually or mo-
 ‘ rally judge and determine for him, the sense and
 ‘ meaning of this rule.

‘ This right of private judgment exercised about
 ‘ the rule, is the only possible center of unity, that
 ‘ can subsist among christians.

‘ Benevolence or charity is the very spirit of
 ‘ truth, therefore no man has found truth, who has
 ‘ lost charity.’

Either Mr. Fleming’s congregation cannot read,
 or, he must certainly have included in these propo-
 sitions, his own ministerial labours from the pulpit
 and the press, or, his preaching and writing are
 the highest impertinencies I ever heard of ; and
 if he be privileged to be dictator to the people, or
 rather claims and thrusts himself into an office he
 is no ways equal to, it is extremely imperative in
 him to be angry with the good old gentlemen a-
 bove, for offering their sentiments concerning
 truth : This smells ranker of Rome, than any
 thing they ever offered to the public in their
 lives.

‘ But it seems the right of private judgment, &c.
 is the only possible center of unity, that ever can
 subsist among christians.’ This is the basis of their
 scheme, and deserves some explication ; and I think
 myself qualified to be commentator here. It is
 to be observed, that this is only the specious cant
 of the junto, to introduce a pernicious system, as
 destructive to christianity, as to the rights of man-
 kind ; the soft language, the Shibboleth of a set of
 sycophant

tycophant furioso's. The plan to be executed is yet but in embryo ; whether Mr. Fleming be in the secret, or only the cat's foot, I will not take upon me to say ; be that as it will, his pamphlet seems to be a bold challenge given out to bring the matter to an issue. Our author's province and Taoalttbob's, seem to be to batter down while their masters build. Creeds, catechisms, confessions, homilies, articles, rituals, and establishments, are to be demolished. The common-prayer and the Westminster catechism smell so rank of christianity, that their revenge is stimulated thereby. They rave †, the moral character is to supercede establishments, systems, &c. To shew the reader the scheme our author is blindly supporting, the plan of the junto, and to set them right about the moral character, I must crave the indulgence of the reader for a few pages.

It is christianity, as revealed, which can alone destroy the pride and obstinacy of the heart, replant the love of the Elahim in the soul, and root out that selfishness which stands in opposition to it. It is the love of the Elahim only, that can engage the man to surrender himself up to them, with an acquiescence of the whole soul, that can engage and convince him that his happiness consists absolutely in his nearness to, and enjoyment of them. Self would make terms with them, would make a conditional bargain, or seek out for some other ally for a self-happiness, without knowing wherein it consists. That the prime object of every man's love stamps his moral character, that it makes him what he is, and determines his happiness here and hereafter, is incontestable. A learned author, says, ' I give a man up to his love, let him love with all his heart what is lovely beyond bounds, and let him do what he pleases ; for sure it

† See Taoalttbob's Diana.

it is, that nothing short of the most pure religion can please him.' This is a more powerful obligation to obedience, than ten thousand moral precepts: It is therefore the love of the Elahim that must form the moral character; for till the intrinsic character be new molded by that, it is the most hideous thing in the lower creation. Before this, the will is engaged against the Elahim, and all the faculties of the soul are not only alienated, but the man is exasperated and in a ferment, rolling from object to object in quest of happiness, and extremely angry that he cannot find it. The principal ground of this mistake, is that self-love the soul is sunk into, and from which it cannot emerge. Why? because it is seeking happiness every where, but where it is to be found: for it comes not from the east nor the west, from the north nor the south, from the mine nor the mint, from the crown nor the mitre, from the moral law nor its damnatory precepts; but from the Elahim: and he that knows himself and the state of human nature, and denies this with his tongue, his heart gives him the lie; and if he be a stranger to this matter, he is so far from being able to teach others, concerning the moral character, that he is ignorant of what most nearly concerns himself: nor will his reason help him here, it will leave him in the dark. But to make out this, to investigate the origin and use of reason for the advantage of our owl-ey'd author, so as to pierce his films, is the office of that agent he has ignorantly treated with neglect. As the love of the Elahim is the origin of the moral character, so it is the source of an universal obedience to them, unselfs the whole soul, and renders the man dependent; destroys all intentional vice in the heart, and roots coveteousness out of the soul: hence the command to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and
soul,

foul, and might, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves, ceases to be grievous. An obedience to the command, becomes as it were natural and a pleasure; before this, it was only as a bridle in the mouth of a mad horse, a yoke upon the neck, an awful restraint upon the mind, which never fail'd to produce enmity. If the ground of the junto's moral character be as above, I congratulate them: but I am far from believing they will agree to it; for their's seems to be of their own manufacturing, an home-spun piece of stuff which cost much labour and pains, and which when twisted with repentance, they put into the scale as so much merit to lay an obligation on their maker. This however is the hopeful system of the junto, which I have had from their own mouths. Methinks this smells ranker of popery than any thing our author charges upon the Soporifics, and is by far a worse system, than any of those he is so angry with. The junto's treatment of establishments, systems, &c. is pretty extraordinary; they have their authors in folio, quarto, &c. they have their clubs, their out-scouts, their hussars, their mercenaries, reviewers, to serve the common cause, and extirpate christianity; yet have they men of zeal among them, each fond of his own system, and artfully recommending it, while his friend's tenaciousness for a different one, suffers it not to pass. The venal groupe may herein be fitly compared to catering gluttons, about the delicacies of a feast; one bursts into an encomium upon the haunch of venison, the next puffs the pasty, the third enters his plea for the Westphalia ham, the next prefers the hogued hare, the next will fight for the herring-pye, at last comes one and swears to a full point, the hot roll dipt in tar exceeds all———They cannot agree about their bill of fare, but on they stroll with maws empty and canine, till they meet with an enter-

entertainment that would please a prophet or an apostle; down sits the junto, one can't eat, the pye is seasoned too high for his disease, the other avers 'tis insipid; the antipathetic gentleman, of as quick scent as those who can smell a concealed cat in a room, swoons, it offends him, it was baked upon a sheet of the old testament, it will make him sick if he tastes it; the next to him can't touch the goose, because it was singed with a sheet of the new; a squeamish lank wretch, who has neither smell nor taste, sits next, fancies it spiced with christianity, and cannot touch it; a blind dizzard sits next, and implicitly refuses to taste it: a bravo sits at the lower end; here, gentlemen, are the dainties of the table, here is a dish well seasoned with classical spice, another well soured with heathenism, another pickled in pirrhonism, here is a delicate hodge-podge, a compound of every dainty, it will not offend your stomachs, for there is not a grain of christianity in it: here is a good pork pye made of a strangled hog, and puddings made of the blood, it would tempt a Jew to taste: our cyder is pressed from the apples of Sodom, and our wine from the grapes of Gomorrah; our bowls were fashioned at the great Babylon, by order of the mighty Nimrod; let us therefore celebrate his gods, and trample upon all who own any other. This is a feast suited to the taste of our modern critics; and methinks, I see our author in masquerade, moving down to the lower end of the table; the critical and monthly reviewers sitting round, simpering and regaling themselves, cramming their maws, till they disgorge their vomit, spoil the feast, and contaminate the provision, rendering it not fit for a swine to swallow. Those lunatics, like their brethren in Moorfields, think themselves great men, and because they have lost their own senses, would have other people

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ple part with theirs ; or, like the fox in the fable, who had lost his tail, and recommended his stump for the fashion. They have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and would have us drink out of their stinking cisterns ; are perfectly unacquainted with the nature of the evidence of intellectual and divine truth, yet expect us to admit them judges : so we will when hogs are admitted to play upon fiddles. They have not yet hit upon the means appointed by God, to make men wise ; but have, with a vengeance, blundered on those devised by the Devil, to make men fools (the abuse of classic learning, and the irrational divinity of the moderns) and thereby oppose their own vain imaginations in divinity, to the word of the Almighty Jehovah. They see not the necessity men are under of accepting the redemption of Christ, or of perishing ; nor the reason of it. They think they can rescue themselves from the power of the grave and from hell, and give to the Elahim a ransom for their own souls *. The principle upon which this is to be done is, their unerring moral obedience, and, in default, the supreme energy of repentance ; by giving the largest scope to christian communion, and fixing the center of unity among christians ; by allowing the right of private judgment, that is, to unite Pagans, Mahometans, Jews, reviewers, quakers, &c. and christians together ; and out of this jumble we are to seek for the moral character, as the only criterion or characteristic of the good man. The Estupendo's and Ensambassadors have thus fixed the plan ; and moral character is to be the standard of orthodoxy, truth, righteousness, goodness, and saintship. The grand Seigneur is to be esteemed a good christian without being baptized, and in return they are to be esteemed good musselmens, without regarding Mahomet,

* Psal. lix. 7, 8. Job. xxxiii. 24. Hosea xiii. 14.

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Moral certainties are fortuitous, and are often defeated by a little ingratitude, or a new turn in politics; moral impossibilities are frequently brought into existence by the same means; moral fitness, when men have departed from the revealed moral standard, or don't understand it, are deceptions whereby men impose upon themselves and the ignorant. Moral mode is a foolery; moral sense a non-entity; moral quantity is the slippery rule for a dishonest man's conscience; all beyond this and short of the scriptures is darkness and chaos; yet, from hence arises that *ignis fatuus*, the moral character, in full glory: yet it is a bladder puff'd with stinking breath, a shining bubble, a scholastic whim, a vagary, a nothing: nor are the dizzards agreed

among themselves about what it is, any better than the ancients were about the *pulchrum* & *honestum*, their chief good and happiness, of which Varro has collected one hundred and eighty opinions: yet those bitterns chickens are perpetually chirping the moral character in our ears.

But lest our author should think I have forgot him, I return to salute him. I would have him know, I am as good a protestant as he, and as much for the right of private judgment; and believe Mr. Pike and the good old gentlemen are so too. The plain and manifest sense of scripture in the original, is the ground of protestantism, and not moral fitness, nor our author's dictatorial dogmatical dreams. His apology has not the protestant stamp; it is too long, or I would transcribe it. His language in it, as well as all through his book, is vague, and its meaning unfixed: in it he has jumbled and confounded characters and things promiscuously; but his barbed arrows are principally pointed at the mystic courtier, the humble christian who pleads his natural and moral impotence, depravity, &c. This man he brands and charges with darkening the glass, that his distempered eyes may avoid the splendor of the illustrious object, truth; (that is, for not seeing through our author's spectacles) while he composes himself, and takes refreshment in the growing vigour of his own abilities, and is highly entertained with the chearful freedoms he daily has with this divine genius. Our author is here in the case of Don Quixote, who knew Dulcinea very well, but never saw her in his life.

A contrast to this apologue may be a parable from *deuz ace*. ‘ Truth was commanded into exile, and the Lady Lie seated on her throne. To perform the tenor of this sentence, Truth went from amongst men, but she went all alone, poor and naked. She had not travelled very far, when

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‘ standing on a high mountain, she perceived a
 ‘ great train pass by with a moral parade, pageants
 ‘ in abundance: in the midst was a chariot attended
 ‘ with kings, princes and governors; and in that
 ‘ a stately Donna, who, like some queen regent,
 ‘ commanded the rest of the train. Poor Truth
 ‘ stood still while this pompous squadron past by;
 ‘ but when the chariot came over-against her, the
 ‘ Lady Lie, who was there seated, took notice of
 ‘ her, and causing her pageants to stay, command-
 ‘ ed her to come nearer. Here she was scornfully
 ‘ examined, whence she came? whither she would
 ‘ go? and what about? To these questions she
 ‘ answered, as the custom of Truth is, very simply
 ‘ and plainly: whereupon the Lady Lie commands
 ‘ her to wait upon her, and that in the rear and tail
 ‘ of all her troop; for that was the known place
 ‘ of Truth. Thanks, then, not to the stars, but
 ‘ to the configurations of the dice! they have ac-
 ‘ quainted me with my future fortunes, and what
 ‘ preferment my book is like to attain to. I am,
 ‘ however, contented, though the consideration of
 ‘ this dirty rear be very nauseous, and sufficient to
 ‘ spoil a stronger stomach than mine. It hath been
 ‘ said of old, *Non est planta veritatis super terram*,
 ‘ Truth is an herb, that grows not below; and
 ‘ can I expect that these few seeds, which I scatter
 ‘ thus in the tempests, should thrive to their full
 ‘ ears, and harvest? But, READER, let it not trou-
 ‘ ble thee, to see the truth come thus behind; it
 ‘ may be there is more of a chace in it, than of
 ‘ attendance, and her condition not altogether so
 ‘ bad as her station.’ If thou art one of those, who
 draw up to the lady, whom our author patronizes
 in her chariot, pause here a little in the rear; and
 before thou dost address thyself to the lady and her
 patron, think not thy courtship lost, if thou dost
 kiss the lips of poor Truth. It is not my intention
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to jest with thee, in what I shall write; wherefore read thou with a good faith, founded on evidence, what I will tell thee with a good conscience.

This point settled, we proceed to observe, that if reason be a seed implanted in our nature, by the hand of our Creator, which will spring naturally without culture; similar to an oak sprouting, and afterwards spreading from an acorn; if it be a principle put into our natures, capable of bringing itself into exercise without revelation, example, instruction, &c. our author is right, and we have nothing to do but attend to it, as the quakers do to their inward light, which, they say, blazes without our kindling; to burn our bibles, as some of them have done; to adore ourselves for our fanatical tricks, when this inward phosphorous reason has kindled itself, and we are playing at gambols by its light. But if reason be a potential principle dormant in the soul, as fire in a flint, till it is excited and struck out, or like that element in wood, where it will sleep for ever till it be kindled *ab extra*, our author is wrong: the former he takes for granted, the latter I have irrefragably proved in two former pamphlets, nor am I in any fear of his learning to overthrow it. Mr. Fleming's mistake in this point, must have been the cause of his blundering all the way; for he that sees not that reason is as above, a potential, inactive principle, till it be awakened and set a-going, neither knows what it is, nor can he know the use of it: it was given us, not to be our guide, but to enable us to be guided; which irrationals can be but very imperfectly. And indeed, if reason were sufficient to guide us, all law and instructions were vain and impertinent, like our author's Scale of principles. He will acknowledge, I suppose, that God gave him reason originally. What then? His growing abilities have added so much to its stock,

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stock, that he is now able to correct that rule that God gave him to be his guide; he knows the how, the why, the when, the where, and the should be, better than his Maker. He has been used to reason so long, till his understanding is adequate to the fit, and the unfit, and the various relations of things lye naked before him, and rise in their order; but unhappily his aptness and his insolence grow together: for I will take upon me to say, a more insolent piece of blasphemy against God the Saviour of the world, the laws and ritual of his country, never yet appeared in print, nor a piece of higher stupidity. Mahomet was quite as good a reasoner in his account of the ebbing and flowing of the tides, as our author in his flights: he concluded upon wrong principles. Bathing at certain times is a principle in Mahomet's scale, which it is presumed by wise men, will have the preference to our author's by far; for he treats Jesus Christ with vastly more veneration: nor am I convinced, that Mr. Fleming would escape with his life in Turkey, for the contempt he has poured upon that divine person. Not many years backward, a Jew was strangled in Constantinople, by order of the Mufti, for blasphemy against Christ. Mahomet, agreeable to his own invented scale, as he thought it was a good one, conceived the angels must be Mahometans and bathe, because they did; and concluded, that as they were large creatures, they must have huge limbs; and when at set times they descended to bathe, they plunged a limb into the Atlantic, or the great South-sea, which made the tide rise; when they had performed their devotion and delighted themselves, they pulled out their legs, put on their stockings, and away to heaven till the next bathing-time; the water in the mean while rushing in to fill up the vast vacuity, retired from the shores, which produced

duced what we call ebb. I give this as a similar instance of our author's close method of reasoning; or rather, as a copy for him to pattern after; for truly he has not reached it yet: indeed, I have no doubt but he will improve, for he is a very FORWARD GENTLEMAN, and by his own account has growing abilities! but they are check'd by the mysteries in his way, they clog his reason and stick in his throat. Before we proceed, we will recommend a gargle compounded of common sense and modesty, and tho' it be a new composition to him, and he a perfect stranger to the ingredients, I will be answerable for its doing him good, if he will use it.

The doctrine of the Trinity falls next in our way. Here our author is not more ignorant than rude, and after much ungenteel language, and supposing the doctrine of transubstantiation as defensible, he closes with a compliment to the Deists. Poor man; I really with my heart and conscience pity him for his ignorance: he is bound fast with the fetters of pride and prejudice, in the condition of a slave who fancies himself a king, in love with his bondage and hates deliverance; therefore for the sake of others, we shall observe, the doctrine of a triune God is written in Scripture as with sun-beams, and ingraven in nature as with the point of a diamond; and he must be blinder than a bat, and wink extremely hard, that cannot see it. The bat flies from darkness to the light, but the imaginary rationalists, the bats of the day, fly from the sunshine, rejoice in their own concealment, when they have hid themselves in more than popish darkness, and for a man's barely peeping at the light, they will bully him with an inquisitorial impudence. Our author's spleen is not more at Mr. Pike and the Soporifics, than at the doctrines they preach; one would however have
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thought, before a man could have assumed the front to have censured a doctrine, which he knows not how to prove or disprove, any more than an owl knows how to tune a spinnet, he would have made himself master of that language, wherein that doctrine and the manner of our conceiving of it, is revealed, and the proof of it given even to demonstration; and not have exploded it under the popular prejudice of a mystery, without knowing, or letting any one else know, what he means by one. In order to talk intelligibly, to set our wisacre right, and to avoid his vague stile, and not to use words without ideas; we say, a mystery is that which cannot be known without revelation: after that, if our abilities were adequate to the objects revealed, the relations of such objects would cease to be mysterious; for a mystery is not revealed in a proposition of unmeaning words, but is always conveyed to us by some natural, sensible, or material image. We say then, that a mystery is the spiritual idea, to be raised from a natural, sensible, or material image, or type, given for that purpose; or, it is the intellectual sense of what the schools call a metaphor. If our author complains that this account of a mystery is obscure, helebore will help him: nor has the materia medica a better remedy for his disease. The doctrine of a triune God is thus revealed; and tho' our conceptions of that doctrine may be inadequate, they are not indistinct nor phantastical. The scripture all along reveals divine things, by natural ones; as this puts the whimsical rationalist and metaphysician under the necessity of knowing things as well as words, it makes them swell: but if we would understand divinity, we must understand nature, or blame ourselves for our ignorance. And tho' I verily believe our author to be no philosopher any more than divine, *i. e.* that he

is an extremely ignorant man, a stranger to the rudiments of science, to the mechanism of nature, the origin of language, and the sacred oracles of God, the scriptures, and that his head is filled with only the lumber of learning, and his heart puffed up with the vanity of having some admirers of that useless gear; yet my compassions for the man urge me to try if I cannot convince him of his deficiency; and that the stick and the bladder, a strum-strum I think they call it, is fitter for his fingers than a pen: if I fail of giving him conviction, as it was well aimed, I am surely intitled to his thanks, and he will be extremely ungrateful if he treats me with resentment; for if I have not cured his itch of writing, till he knows more of the matter, he must be in a frenzy.

The scriptures convey to us, the idea of a triune Deity; that is, a Being subsisting in three distinct divine personalities, without supremacy or subordination, without superiority or inferiority in either: and he that would conceive any thing about this matter, so as to convey the knowledge of it to others, ought first to understand the language in which the scriptures were written, and in which the account they give of the common, and now demonstrable, properties and mechanism of that substance in nature, which actually exists in this triune manner, and which cannot exist otherwise, is only to be found *. I mean the matter, the fluid of the material heavens, or the natural agents, which, as God's instruments, support and carry on all the operations of nature, Gen. ii. 2. Heb. Bib. which the scriptures have made the shadow, the material type of the immaterial

* If our author asks here, Can one language convey ideas which another cannot? I answer, yes, the Hebrew can, and actually does convey ideas which another cannot, for want of words proper to the objects.

terial agents, which support and carry on all the operations of the spiritual world, and that that was designed to give us ideas of what would for ever have remained a secret, a mystery inscrutable by the understanding of men and angels without it: for I will grant that inconceivables merely, are not the objects of our faith, but things revealed are, they belong to us and our children, Deut. xxix. 29.

To give a full account of the mechanical nature of this material fluid, its oneness of substance, its threefold condition, its amazing strength, its wonderful activity, its subtil and pervading nature, and its universal instrumentality throughout the whole natural world, would involve a system of natural philosophy; and therefore I shall note here, that the scriptures and the consideration of these things have been neglected so long, till a man may as well talk of negative quantities, and conic sections to a herdsman, as to be understood when he says any thing about them: yet I will venture to say, and hope to be able to prove when called upon, that this matter of the heavens exists in the condition of fire, light, and spirit (air); that these three are originally and really of the same substance; and yet in their distinct appearances, operations, and actions in the natural world, they are not numerically the same, nor their effects the same. The light is not the spirit nor the fire; the spirit is not the fire nor the light; the fire is not the light nor the spirit; nor are their effects the same, but very different. This matter (substance) is fire in the sun; it is light in its recess from the sun; it is spirit in its access to the sun: thus it exists, thus it acts, and thus it must exist and act in a perpetual circulation, from the center to the circumference, and from the circumference to the center, while nature

remains; acting upon, and moving every secret spring and wheel in the macrocosm, and the microcosm too. Here our philosophers may look with success for the natural cause of gravitation, projection, elasticity, electricity, magnetism, &c. and if they will not, must be content to guess at them and be mistaken. I will give him leave to sneer, who can devise an experiment to separate fire from the light and spirit; or light from the spirit and fire, or spirit from the fire and light, and promise to become his disciple: but this we know is impossible; and tho' mankind have generally considered fire, as appointed to perform the principal offices in nature; and light, as chiefly designed to make objects visible (tho' this is one of its lowest offices) and spirit (air) as formed only to give animals breath, to waft our ships, and drive our mills about; notwithstanding it will be found (at least it may) by every one, by all that will take pains, and by the severest experiments that even an enemy can demand, or the mind devise, that this triune substance, these stupendous agents, are the pillars of nature, the artificers in all her wonderful works, the basis on which they stand; and when and where they work not, she dies.

Their substance is a dry fluid, forming an expansion by acting or moving in opposite directions, at the same point of time; and thereby producing an universal stress upon all nature. Some of the things which we have been conversant with from our childhood, and which are overlooked and neglected because they are common, are demonstrations of this: but he that will not believe Moses and the prophets, who have treated of those things philosophically and truly, in the original scriptures; and he that will withhold his assent, tho' one rose from the dead, why should I expect him to believe me?

The

The old philosophers indeed understood this matter better than it has been understood since: they all had a trinity; the doctrine of which they received, not only by tradition from the ancient patriarchs, but well understood that trinity in nature, which was, and is, the type of the supernatural trinity; and, were they alive, would despise the men that did not. I mean not the foolish Romans; but Plato, Parmenides, &c. [See Cudworth's intellectual system.] Air is the proper pabulum of fire (common fuel being but the stage whereon it acts); nor can the fire exist one moment without it; nor retain it one moment without sending it out in light (the fusion of red-hot iron by a cold blast, our culinary fires, our lighted candles and lamps prove this): as fire cannot exist one moment without being fed by the air; changing it into itself, and sending it out in light, so light cannot exist one moment, but it becomes air in its turn, and is impelled into the fire: air cannot exist one moment without being transformed from, and fed by the lights impelled into the fire, and issued out in light again: so that they are one substance in three conditions, mutually depending upon and supporting, and are a constant source to, each other; and if either of them were to be annihilated, all nature would in one moment be destroyed. This is no theory, no reverie of mine; it is the mechanism of nature, or, it is God's revelation of it. There is not one truth in the mathematics, or in nature, capable of a clearer demonstration than this matter; and if our merit-mongers and infidels did not neglect the works of God, to prosecute the inventions of the creature, and were not misled by illiterate ethnics, they might see those mysteries by their reason, which are now above their faith. Therefore, since divinity and nature are thus connected thro' the whole system, for any one to set himself up to teach divinity without

out understanding nature, and that repository of learning, the holy bible, is an affair similar to a man's teaching arithmetic without figures. Nature is an object worthy every man's contemplation; the infallible word of the Almighty is, as it were, the microscope through which we may view it, and see the unity of the Deity preserved, and the Trinity too, without confounding either; and every other divine doctrine rendered intelligible, even that of Jesus Christ being God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever; the depravity of the human nature, which rendered such a step necessary; the doctrine of the resurrection, &c. But to enter upon the proof and illustration of all the doctrines our author has impertinently and rudely objected to, were to write a body of divinity; therefore, before we proceed, I shall call upon him in his own way: 'But hark you, Mr. Fleming, did it become your pen (page 11) to call your superiors to account? why this air of impotent authority? what, and who are you? a little insignificant mortal that would assume the seat of judicial majesty.'—But hark you, have you learning enough to call me to an account for, or to controul what I have written above? No, no more than if you had been hatched by a bittern. Your classic learning (if you have any) will fail you here; your rational powers, unassisted by revelation, will do so too; nor will your *brains be of any use to you, till they are rinsed*. You have advanced a plan of divinity; founded upon what? empty words, vain imaginations, baseless dreams and phantoms; a plan that has no foundation or standing in nature or reason; for both nature and reason bear witness against it. The bath-coll of the Jews, the inward light of the quakers, or the second sight famous in Scotland, are quite upon a level with, and afford as clear evidence to found a divinity upon, as that capricious jilt which our classical fribbles

bles have strumpeted away their common sense with ; that will-with-a-wisp our author has mistook for reason. This mistake puts him into the condition of an hungry child roaming with weary steps, and many a fall over hillocks and banks, in quest of a wasp's nest to fill his belly with honey ; or of the wanton one who seeks butterflies to play with, and through swamps and thickets tears his flesh, and at last mistakes hornets for them. This is peculiar to the mere rationalist, and this is his race after happiness ; and after having exerted all his strength he sits down defeated : for he has mistaken the means of intelligence, and so the object of his happiness. He is in the condition of a shatter'd bark in a tempest without rudder and compass ; on he drives before the wind, till he is stranded on a lee-shore ; dripping and half-drowned he escapes ; with craving maw he strolls on the continent, till the manchineels prompt his appetite ; he mistakes them for apples, swallows, and is poisoned : or like an innocent, roaming the waste for flowers, puts his fingers into the ling, and a serpent bites him. Our author may sneer at this, if he pleases, it will recoil upon his own pate. His reason ! the vigour of his own growing abilities shall guide him in the way ! the strength of his own arm shall work out his salvation ! his own merits with the superaddition of the supreme energy of repentance * shall placate the divine being, or he will perish. This, satanical as it is, is the purport of our author's book. If I have not wronged him, and I know I have not, I am in hopes the junto will confess in this he is arrogant.

The assembly's answers to the 7, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21 questions you disapprove. What then, I pray ! who are you ? who constituted you inquisitor-general ? Is the light the worse, because the owl's eyes cannot bear it ? But hark you, Sir, you have

* A phrase of their own.

have with the imputation of Adam's sin, exploded the depravity of the human nature. In this the bulk of mankind, learned and unlearned, good and bad, heathen and christian, the papist and the protestant, stand ready to controul you ; the scripture, the corruption of the natural world and common sense, the general experience of old and young, the wise and the foolish, stare you in the face here ; but happy for you, you cannot blush, Jer. iii. 3.

It is presumed, the tenaciousness of men for the imputation of Adam's sin, has been from their unwillingness to part with what our author tramples upon, *viz.* the merits of Christ : but we think the idea of the application of the merits of Christ to the sinner, neither stands nor falls by the imputation or the non-imputation of Adam's sin, but on an infinitely better foundation, which we pass now to observe : That it is certain, ‘ upon the disobedience
 ‘ and transgression of the first man, the creature was
 ‘ made subject to vanity ; for the curse followed and
 ‘ spoiled our natures : impure seeds were joined
 ‘ with the pure, and they reign to this hour, not
 ‘ only in our bodies, but in every natural thing :
 ‘ and he that denies this, is too ignorant to receive
 ‘ conviction. “ Thou art cursed above all cattle,
 ‘ and above every beast of the field ;” so that cat-
 ‘ tle and beast were cursed, but this serpent above
 ‘ them all. Read Rom. viii. 20, &c. Here the
 ‘ apostle, by the creature understands not man, but
 ‘ the inferior species, which he distinguishes from
 ‘ the children of God : but allows both the same
 ‘ liberty. In the subsequent verses we find the first
 ‘ fruits of the spirit referr'd to man ; and why not
 ‘ some secondary subordinate fruits of it to the
 ‘ creatures in general ? for as they were cursed in
 ‘ the fall of man for man's sake, so, it seems, in
 ‘ his restitution they shall be blessed for his sake.”
 Let us survey the miseries our first parent was sub-
 ject

ject to, it will be of use to us. ‘ He was ejected
 ‘ from the presence of God, and exposed to the
 ‘ malice and temptation of the devil. He was al-
 ‘ tered from good to bad, from incorruptible to
 ‘ corruptible. He was excluded from a glorious
 ‘ paradise, and confined to a base world, whose
 ‘ sickly infected elements conspired with his own
 ‘ nature to hasten that death, which already began
 ‘ to reign in his body. Heaven mourned over
 ‘ him, the earth and all her generations about him.
 ‘ He looked upon himself as a felon, a murderer,
 ‘ being guilty of that curse and corruption, which
 ‘ succeeded in the world because of his fall. He was
 ‘ ignorant (howsoever knowing his sons may be)
 ‘ and therefore hopeless, of life eternal; and for this
 ‘ temporal life, he was not acquainted with the pro-
 ‘ visions of it. The elements of husbandry were
 ‘ not as yet known; there was neither house nor
 ‘ plough, nor any of those manual arts, which make
 ‘ up a worldly providence. He was exposed to the
 ‘ violence of rains and winds, frosts and snows;
 ‘ and, in a word, deprived of all comforts spiritual
 ‘ and natural. He was a meer stranger in the
 ‘ world, could not distinguish medicine from poi-
 ‘ son; neither was he skill’d in the ordinary prepa-
 ‘ rations of meat and drink. He had no victuals,
 ‘ but the crude unseasoned herbage of the earth;
 ‘ must starve, or feed, as Nebuchadnezzar did,
 ‘ with the beast of the field.’ Sorrowful situation!
 Had Adam had our author’s strength of reason, he
 had shifted very well; but the want of that ren-
 dered a revelation necessary; which he actually had,
 and which our author positively rejects. He had
 a revelation of the mysteries of both worlds; of the
 three above in heaven, and of the three beneath on
 earth: the latter inferiors bear witness to the former
 superiors, and are their proper receptacles. They
 are created books and signatures, where we may read

the mysteries of the supernatural Trinity. Have mercy upon me, what shall I do! the sons of science, whose reason can inform them how the earth was tilled before the found of Tubal Cain's hammer, will dub me a greater mystic than ever Jacob Behmen was. It is not more the fate of an author to miscarry because of obscurity, than it is of inferior wits to blame him for their having no brains, and to attempt to effect that by scandal, which they cannot do by reason. When our author, or his masters, attempt this, I will scourge them out of their ignorance, or discipline them for it with thongs of scorpions.

He seems not pleased, page 16. with the idea of God's decree: but he does but think it is unscriptural. This is the only modest part of his book: yet, he seems to be sure 'the fall of man was not decreed, because God could not fore-ordain sin; --and if he had fore-ordained whatever comes to pass, there would not any thing come to pass, but what is right and good, and there could be no sin in the world.' To be sure, he is a judge, and can see through all the stages of time, and into eternity; and knows the final upshot of things, the fit and the unfit; can tell us the origin of moral evil, and what it is precisely; can tell us what was, and what was not, decreed; can tell us exactly the reason of the growing abilities of an imperfect creature, his dear self; and the declining ones in a perfect man, Adam; no doubt, he can reconcile the decree and the liberty of the will; and punctually settle a controversy that has perplexed Jews, heathens, and Christians, for so many thousand years. If I were disposed to litigate this point with him, I would ask, if the fall of man and the entrance of sin happened unawares to the infinitely wise God? and if it did not, why his goodness did not prevent it? or did it happen against his will? and whether he

he is sure that infinite advantages do not accrue to us all by it? I think there do, and that I am a gainer by it; and if he is not, it is his own fault.

After our author has with much stupid drollery censured the doctrines of revelation, the mysterious parts in them displeases him: and if God will not give the rationale of his duty, he is no God for him, nor will he strike one stroke in his vineyard, page 17; but, although he stands block'd between two incomprehensible eternities, familiarly prates about the infinite perfections of the incomprehensible Jehovah, surrounded with ten thousand incomprehensibles in nature, his conception in the womb, his being nourished there, and ever since by food; his muscular motion, the circulations and secretions of his fluids, the union of his soul and body; the tendency of bodies to the earth, the magnetic power of the poles, the motion of the electrical fire; and a million of other incomprehensibles in nature, which he finds himself obliged to believe, notwithstanding their incomprehensibility; yet, cannot he avoid cavilling at mysteries in religion. The xxxvith and following chapters of Job, and those——of Esdras, if he would read them, perhaps might bring him to his senses. I shall be told those facts above are believed, but not the mode of them; a flimsy distinction indeed: the incarnation is a fact upon which the salvation of the world depended: the fact I believe, because it is recorded in scripture; which scripture, whether Mr. Fleming will or will not, I am able to prove, contains the truth of God: the mode of the incarnation is not the object of my faith. And tho' the works of God are as inscrutable as his essence, the smatterers of our author's stamp, with a fashionable philosophical faith, without staggering, believe infinite fooleries about the modes of natural and moral incomprehensibles.

He tells us in page 19, ‘ He makes use of his reason, as the only power or ability he has, to judge of scripture doctrines,’—and below mistakes his ill nature for wit: wit drops from his pen, as blood does from a flint. When he has told us what he means by reason, the rectitude of his rule of judging scripture doctrines will be known, not before; for the reader is to know, I suspect his reason to be as carnal, blind, and devilish, as Mr. Pike’s, or any other man’s: if so, it is a very bad power to judge of scripture-doctrine, Rom. vii. 14. viii. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 1. He lays all the carnality at Mr. Pike’s door, while he himself seems to be immaculate. It would be very kind in him, to have told us what he means by reason; whether it be a power in the mind, assisted by the revelation of God, or needs such assistance; or, as above, it be a spiritual phosphorus, blazing and bursting into an infinity of wild imaginations. If the former, then it is to be regulated by the revelation of God in divine and moral matters; and until it has passed under such a regulation, it cannot be a fit judge: how far his reason has been subjected to the rule of revelation, he is to judge. If the latter, and it has been refractory to that rule, or negligent in understanding it; or a stranger to the language in which it was wrote, and he will faucily, and by a supposed intuitive light and power, judge concerning it, a blind man is as good a judge of colours. I wish this may not be the case with him; but if it be, the history of Don Quixote is of as much use to him as the bible; nor is he at all a better judge of it, than of a book he never read. To judge of revelation by a natural intuitive power of the mind, is to reproach God for giving one; for the mind accounted with such an inborn power, renders a further revelation useless and impertinent: for without
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all doubt, if my intuitive reason can judge of the propriety of a revelation from God, as the rule of my actions ; by the same intuitive reason I can regulate my actions without such revelation. If this be the case, our author is a quaker but don't know it, and as arrant an enthusiast as any, even the worst of that sect : if the former be the case, he has used the word reason with as much impropriety, as it would be to talk of a fervent frost, and mistake it for a rainy morning ; but it is no new thing with him, for he has used mystery, mystic, gospel, reason, rational, law, propitiation, &c. in a vague, unlimited, and unfixed sense, so that frequently any other words would have done as well.

Page 18, our author is very angry with Mr. Pike, for his account of the atonement ; but as that doctrine is handled at large by the reverend Mr. Lee, in answer to the great champion of their cause, Dr. Taylor of Norwich, in the most genteel manner, and upon the very plan the Dr. pointed out ; and tho' the public expected the Doctor's reply, he seems not to like the task, it has made him sick ; thither I refer the reader. In the interim, I would ask our author, if he be quite sure that God would have been propitious, if Christ had not died ? If he answers in the affirmative, I ask the grounds of his certainty ; for I don't chuse to take his word. He looks upon the atonement of Christ, as derogatory to the immutable, eternal, unmerited, and adorable goodness and love of God : this is charming doctrine to the Infidel or Deist. But it appears to me, that God is rendered propitious by the death of Christ, and that men are thereby also reconciled to God : and tho' he rejects the death of Christ, to solace himself in the unoriginated, supreme, immutable, and unmerited goodness of his God ; and takes refreshment in the
growing

growing vigour of his own abilities, and spurns at the righteousness of Christ, the lord of life, as a cover for injustice, fraud, debauchery, pride, and envy, Page 29 ; it would have been modest in him to have consulted his bible, before he had advanced this foul and blasphemous charge. That God is propitious and reconciling the world to himself by Jesus Christ, is true ; but it is as true, that he has received a ransom, and been thereby propitiated : here our author shall not be indulged with a translation ; he shall stick to the original, or at least I will. But what am I doing ? Can I conceive Mr. Fleming can, read either Greek or Hebrew ? If he can, he is in the condition of those Jer. iii. 3. The Septuagint have rendered כפר by *ιλατμός*, the word used in the new testament for propitiation, 1 John, ii. 2. iv. 10. Rom. iii. 25. Lev. xxv. 9. Numb. v. 8. Gen. xxxii. 20. Exod. xxi. 30. xxix. 33, 36, 37. xxx. 10, 12, 15, 16. xxxii. 30. Lev. i. 4. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35. v. 6, 10, 13, 18. vi. 7, 30. viii. 15, 34. Numb. xvi. 46. I have not room here to comment upon this last amazing chapter, but would observe, that the rebels mentioned therein, were of the same sad coloured hue with our author : for what was the dispute about ? Preheminence ? No, but the atonement. Ye Moses and Aaron take too much upon you, seeing the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. That is, the people are void of depravity, and so holy, as to need no atonement, no intercessor at all ; they can each man for himself, approach to God, do his duty, and claim his reward ; therefore we will have nothing to do with your propitiator : but I would ask to whom the atonement was made, verse 46 ? To Jehovah, or the people ? without all controversy it was made to Jehovah, for the people : “ make an atonement for them, for wrath is gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.” I am in no fear of
any

any man's learning to overthrow this; when it is attempted we will go through the chapter.

He confesses, speaking of the gospel, p. 20, 'An Almighty force and energy in the divine argument and motive.' This is gibberish to me, for I do not understand the Almighty force and energy of an argument: to produce what? The graces of the spirit, which are all of them, he says, 'rational attainments, or moral virtues.' There is nothing in christianity irrational, or immoral; yet the graces of christianity are only to be arrived at, by the mighty POWER of God, not the energy of an argument, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. In the next page (21) he says, speaking of the same thing, 'in this man is the agent, and the word or spirit of God the instrument or means of his illumination and reformation.' Here our rational illuminatee, has either divulged a mystery, or made a blunder: for if there be an almighty energy and force in the divine argument, one would think the man were patient here; but he avers man to be the agent: how is this?

In page 22, he comes to close quarters, to combat the extra extravagance of Mr. Pike; for the sake of which, he humbly hopes the public will allow there was sufficient reason for his letter——'because the subject is universally interesting;' therefore as an advocate for God and truth, he steps forth to plead the dignity of the human nature; to sink the law of God to its standard, and to shew Mr. Pike is an Antinomian. Bravely designed, but badly executed. The poor thing treats the law of God, as a pettifogger does an act of parliament; as regarding not the secret embryo's of iniquity, but the outward act only: he is a sloven, a nasty scullion; he takes care of the outside of the cup and platter, while he leaves the inside filthy and void of his care: for all his interrogatories, page

22, 23, terminate in the outward observance only ; excepting, that at last as a salvo he brings in that text, “ if ye love me, keep my commandments, &c.” and quotes the Psalmist against himself ; for the Psalmist prays, that God would cleanse him in his inward parts, and from secret iniquities, &c.

In page 24, he is a little puzzled about the justification of a sinner, who has violated the law of God ; but ventures roundly to affirm ‘ his justification depends on his repentance of that violation, and on his recovery, to a delight in that law, &c.’ Where our author pick’d up this, I pretend not to say ; but sure I am the matter, as he has stated it, is not to be found in the bible : the 18th of Ezekiel, when he demands it, shall be shewn not to his purpose. The law knows nothing of repentance ; sin and die, sin and be damned, is its language : it has no proviso, admits of no evasion, binds the secret thoughts and purposes of the soul, consigns the transgressor over for ever, without bail ; till the great Redeemer, by price and by power, interposes in favour of the criminal, burst his bonds, rescues the slave, opens the prison doors, proclaims liberty to the captive, and makes him his own willing servant for ever. This is a better security against Antinomianism, than our author’s fairy receipt of finning and repenting ; repenting and finning in an endless round.

Page 25, he is extremely griev’d at the assembly’s enormous accusation of all mankind ; and thinks it deserves the indignation of those who would vindicate the honour, either of God or man ; and is ready to burst with indignation himself, at the thought of the depravity of the human nature, and his not being indulged to claim eternal life, for his own personal immaculate obedience to God’s law ; or for not being admitted to repair the breach by repentance, without telling us what he means
by

by that word. I agree with him that this is a point, the solution of which may be left to any impartial and unprejudiced mind; for it explodes all the religion that has ever been in the world at once, and leaves nothing but the dregs of heathenism in its room. Upon our author's plan, judaism was a foolery, christianity is a cheat, and Christ Jesus out of office; the wiser Heathens were all fools for depending on any thing but their own merit to save them and placate their gods. Sacrifice, priesthood, offerings, &c. of old, worship, acknowledgement of the infinite goodness of God in the redemption of the world, prayer to God for his assistance, thanksgiving to him for his mercies, now are all discarded; and we stand with a claim upon God, when we have done our duty, to receive our wages; and puff and swell with the vanity of our sufficiency, our merit, *i. e.* our self-conceit. I am not conscious I have wronged our lump of proud flesh, our author here; when he can shew that I have, I will acknowledge it; and that 'every benevolent, good man, is a perfect man; that the contrary to this, is all systematic cant; and that all but our own is an invented, fanciful, chimerical righteousness.' I could here, if it would not be deemed a paw-paw trick, give our author a large catalogue of books fit for him to read, to cure his ignorance of the manners of mankind, and of the iniquitous and secret springs of their actions in general; but I must content myself with naming only Dr. Young's Estimate, and Rochefaucault. I have always observed, upon our author's principles, that their sermons and prayers have never agreed, but grinned at each other; and how is it possible that it should be otherwise? For if man has those inborn powers naturally, this innate strength of reason, this huge and compleat stock of self-sufficiency to do his duty and claim his wages, what

has he to pray for? And if he be so void of depravity, and so filled with purity as to need no mediator or atonement, what has he to confess or give thanks for? I defy any man to form a prayer consistent with our author's plan: a very little knowledge of the manners of mankind will help him, if he be not incorrigible and refractory. But now he comes in with a clincher, and urges that 'our abilities must be equal to our moral obligation, to the demands of the law; for if I have lost my arms and legs in Adam, the law can neither oblige me to work, nor walk: but my inactivity is quite innocent and harmless.' I will compliment Mr. Fleming here, by acknowledging the how, the why, the when, and the where, of this matter lyes not quite naked to my understanding, any more than the cause of the negro's colour: but the fact, as it is in human nature, does. By the light of God's revelation reflecting upon my rational powers, and enabling me to think, I find, and stand convinced of the rectitude and equity of the law, or doctrine of God; and know that it condemns the first broodings of iniquity, that it binds the first and most secret purposes of sin, that it reaches the inmost recesses of my soul, and requires truth in the inward parts, and that all the world stands guilty before God. I know too, that the heart of every man naturally lyes adverse to this; that it is not in the power of man, with all his natural and moral abilities and activity, to love the Lord his God with all his heart and soul, and mind, and strength; nor to love his neighbour and his enemy as his own soul: yet this the law of God requires, it is its first principle, its first lesson, upon which all the rest depends; all moral activity and obedience really hangs on this, and without which, all pretence to a sound morality is neither more nor less, than vice in masquerade:

It is the gospel, and not the law, that furnishes us with motives sufficient to be thus moral. Command, allure, &c. the cruel tyrant, the covetous niggard, the iron-hearted oppressor, the man in full career to be rich or honourable, &c. to stop and alienate his mind from his present pursuits, and in simplicity turn to God and love him as above; though you may convince him that it is right for him to do so, he will soon convince you that our moral abilities, and our moral obligations, are not adequate to each other. Those who think this instance not sufficient, I advise to try the experiment upon themselves, and if they disown their conviction, I will divulge a secret which they will not speak out, *i. e.* that while their tongues are framing an answer, their hearts give them the lie, and with that lie in their right hands I leave them.

He next struts out for the reputation of man, with a dictate of natural religion; page 28, urges Pet. ii. 17; bullies Mr. Pike's 'system of corruption, the notion of original sin, as deplorably depressing the veneration due to man, and his opinion of an imputed, with his contempt of a personal, righteousness; (a fly imputation!) as capitally injurious to the rights of mankind, as enervating or relaxing the view and sentiment of moral obligation, as reconciling to the criminal indulgence, from the plea of frailty, corruption, and depravity.' His mention of a dictate of natural religion, I impute to his ignorance; I have kick'd that off the stage long since, past his power of bringing it on; nor can he, or any other man, tell what they mean by it. As our author has advanced nothing in this 29th page, on the doctrine of original sin, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but an heap of malicious scandal, and not the least syllable of an argument, nor the appearance of one; we shall pass this, and

think the man that can overlook what the assembly have said, and the texts they have quoted in their answer in their larger catechism, must be blinder than an owl : while we profess to agree with our author, page 30, ‘ That the true test of christian opinions, is their moral tendency, &c.’ This, with what follows, was manifestly designed as an invective against those he distinguishes by orthodox. Had Mr. Fleming discovered more immorality amongst those, than amongst his dear merit-mongers, it is presumed, he has a mouth hard enough to speak out ; therefore, as it is only an invidious hint, we shall pay no regard to it.

He next upbraids Mr. Pike upon the principles of Protestantism, and artfully places him amongst the admirers of the Athanasian cursing creed. To attempt a vindication of Mr. Pike, or his five reverend fathers here, would be to injure them ; because their candour and moderation are known to all men : but I here appeal to the reader of the lowest degree of common sense, whether Mr. Fleming has not, throughout his performance, retained the true spirit of popery, in that rage and rancour that runs through the whole ; in that bigotry which appears against principles he does not understand, and in support of his own, which he believes, without evidence ? for I will take upon me to say, he is a stranger to the nature of the evidence of intellectuals ; nor does he know now, how he became a rational creature, if he be one. Two as bad badges as any in the church of Rome, are their doctrine of merit, and their persecuting principles : the former our author has maintained with as domineering an air, as an inquisitor-general could do ; and the ardour of his maintaining his own whims, vagaries, and dreams, bespeak him fit for that office ; only ’tis presumed his want of orthodoxy would disqualify him ; for they ultimately main-

maintain the doctrine of the atonement, the Trinity, the depravity, and some other doctrines, which he flatly denies, without knowing the foundation on which they stand.

Our author draws to a close, page 31, with some very ill-natured reflections, and very unfair inferences. First, he complains that 'the assembly's catechism is obscure and unintelligible, in its fundamentals. Secondly, It sadly prejudiceth the mind against the rationality, plainness, and simplicity, of the gospel; and perhaps has made more infidels, than any other admired system whatsoever amongst the Protestants. Thirdly, Its warmest advocates do most shamefully place it on a level with the holy scriptures; or rather would have it understood as an infallible key to their sense and meaning, in which Protestants have adopted the very worst principles of popery. Fourthly, The decay of religion among us, and a contempt of the bible, probably, is much owing to the misrepresentation therein given of the christian doctrine.'

I will be an advocate for no man that over-rates this, or any other catechism, or system; but least of all for one who under-rates the scriptures, as I think our author has; nor am I fond of multiplying fundamentals: but it is notwithstanding, a dogma with me, that that may be fundamental and esteemed so, to a man born in a christian country with the bible in his possession, that is not so to an heathen. Mr. Fleming, under the flimsy pretence of militating against systems, and human opinions, seems at least to level his darts at revelation, and the doctrines contained therein; and under the silly pretext of setting aside the former, explodes all that is worth holding in the latter: for strip the bible of the doctrines of the Trinity, and atonement, and there is nothing left worth a wise man's contend-
ing

ing for : whosoever denies those doctrines with the bible in his hand, is no christian, but as arrant an heathen as any upon the Cape of Good Hope : and if Mr. Fleming thinks himself involved here, he is to look to that ; I am in no fear of his learning, nor his vengeance.

The rationality of the gospel is such, and so clear, that, till the man understands it, his reason is of no use to him ; but will bewilder him. This is our author's case ; therefore he mistakes his imagination, his whims, for reason ; nor knows how to distinguish between them. His *perhaps* is best answered, with a *perhaps* he is mistaken ; for it is such reveries as he has published, that have added to the number of our infidels.

I do not know those warm advocates who have placed the catechism upon a level with scripture, or made it a key to their sense of it ; I am not of their number ; and when I find them, will blame them as much as our author : but have not met with any protestant, who has adopted such dangerous principles of popery as he has.

The decay of religion and contempt of the bible among us, is certainly owing to such misrepresentations of the christian doctrine as Mr. Fleming has given : nor have I ever known, but piety and devotion have decayed in the same proportion as a man has given into such misrepresentations, till he has thrown off the mask, and turn'd infidel. I am able to give many instances of this sort.

The four remaining pages of this pamphlet consist in a scandalous misrepresentation of Mr. Pike, as
 ‘ a bigot to the catechism, an enemy to the rights of private judgment ; comparing his moderation to the catholicism of a popish priest, and damning all out of his own communion ; hereticating all who admit not his sense of scripture, with a good Lord deliver

deliver us from such advocates of religious liberty.² As vile a misrepresentation this, as to charge him with being an highway-robber. He goes on, according to the scheme of the junto recited above, to shew that ‘nothing in religion is to be regarded, but by the moral effects, *i. e.* the moral character.’ We may take an estimate of his sense of the moral character, by the sense he has put upon the law of God, page 22, 23, where he has shrunk it to his own liking; and though he be an unitarian, and has a different opinion of the mediation (or no opinion of it); yet, he says, if he can shew out of a good conversation, that the same spirit dwells in him that dwelt in Christ Jesus; or, if he be influenced to an imitation of him; ‘what is your advantage?’

When he will declare the difference between an unitarian and a mahometan, and who that spirit was that dwelt in Christ Jesus, *i. e.* whether that spirit was God or a creature, or a compound between both; a mode, a quality, a name, a something or a nothing; I will tell him where the advantage lies. In page 34 he is very complaisant to the Arminian and the Arian; but still out of temper with Mr. Pike, and charges him with taking inconceivables and inexplicables into his creed, and making them essentials; and with being an enemy to reason in religion. It is presumed, this charge is invidious; and that if Mr. Fleming has any creed, he has as many inexplicables and inconceivables as Mr. Pike. Essentials, or reason, are not to be found in Mr. Fleming’s Scale; and, I suppose, if he had had either, they would have appeared there. In page 35, one would think he had acknowledged the faith of a christian not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; but his whole pamphlet denies that, unless reason be God. He would have all creeds, confessions and systematic catechisms, decryed as
hurtful

hurtful to christianity, since 'every man is to form his own sense of the divine rule from itself; because no man, or assembly of men, can make it plainer or more intelligible than it is.' Hence it follows undeniably, that every man that preaches is a fool, and that all his hearers are so too. He is not pleased, that he has not the modelling of our academies; that he cannot rid them of systematic divinity; and that that science should be learned from the fountain in its greatest simplicity and purity. If by the fountain, he means the original scriptures, I agree with him: but when our academicians teach the languages in their purity the scriptures were wrote in, they will be ashamed to admit a classical author into their schools. The highest and truest strokes of elegance to be found, are in the scriptures: nor can the classic authors compare with them. But since our author is so fond of the classics, without knowing why; a short account of what they contain will be necessary. They contain a fund, a chaos of heathenism; a mixture, a confusion equal to that at Babel. Our classical publications; what are they? but new-vamped old errors, an approximation not to Rome papal, but to Rome pagan: they abound with all conceivable smut, filth and beastliness, beyond the language or practice of the common brothels. And though our gentlemen learned in the languages, must be dragg'd or whipp'd through this slush and mire, before they commence preachers, physicians, &c. yet afterwards they must hide all this in their hearts, and dextrously mimic a chastity, never yet to be found in the human nature: and while this fund of filth lies closely wrapp'd up in their minds, their tongues must not pronounce some chapters in the pure scriptures. Yet shameful as this is, our author wants to give an elegance to composition from classical writings. When he can tell

us their use, except the little history they contain, he will do a service: for though by learning, the languages they are wrote in, some books may be read, which otherwise could not; yet those languages may be learnt to as great perfection, without a person's flouncing, like a flounder in the mud, thro' all this nastiness, or danger of being paganised. He is in a pannic, for fear Mr. Pike should form his pupils too systematically: if that should happen to be the case, it would then be a fit time to throw the classics in; for I will be answerable for it, that they are quite sufficient to unsystemize any man, by spoiling his manners and starving his understanding. Now, after all the pains I have taken to please our author, and to instruct him too, I really think I deserve some compliment. If he will transmit the following queries to the wonderful Taoalttbob, I will accept of it as an ample reward. That wonderful gentleman having adjusted his thoughts by our author's Scale, ventured abroad in masquerade.

Quere, Whether personal revenge was not the ground of it; or, what could move him to falsify, in taking a formal quotation from a former publication of Mr. Pike's, when neither the words nor the ideas in that quotation are to be found? *Quere*, Whether falsehood, revenge, &c. concealed, be not a brilliant in the crown of the modern moral character? I had liked to have forgot to correct our author for fibbing, or a trick so like it, that it is hard to distinguish. He misrepresents an affair at Brentwood; and would insinuate, that Mr. Pike gave God thanks that the gospel was like to be preached there, where it had not been preached before for forty years; and that this thanksgiving carried a reflection on the episcopalians in that town; whereas the whole of the story is a mangled kind of forgery; and all that is certain in it is, that the expression that gave the disgust remains uncertain; that Mr. Pike

was not the man who used it ; that the episcopallians were not included in the idea ; nor was the time limited since the gospel had been preached there ; nor Mr. Fleming witness to the transaction : but that as he has taken his whole system, so he has this story, and ventured to publish it upon the credit of he knows not who. But any scavenger's cart will do, for him to throw dirt from. I shall add no more at present ; but to assure him I have wrote with no spleen nor ill wish to him, but with that spirit which I think his overbearing manners deserve ; that Mr. Pike had no hand in it, nor any belonging to him ; that neither he nor they ever saw a line of it, till it was published ; that it was not undertaken, till near one month after his was published : nor then, but to refresh the vigour of my own growing abilities : therefore no one is to blame, but myself ; and if I have been criminal, I hope to make atonement by the strength of my own merits : and to this end, I doubt not, but our author wishes me more modesty, a clearer head, and a better heart. I heartily return him the compliment, and cordially wish him the same blessing ; and am,

His most humble Servant,

JOHN DOVE.

P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

A Short notice of Mr. Fleming's Scale is taken, only to convince him that it is not neglected. If he had call'd it an escalada to storm christianity, and himself an escalador, I should not have wondered: but a scale of first principles, I presume, borders upon an impropriety. He begins, by asking wherein a man's vanity and folly consist? I answer. In meddling with what he does not understand. Wherein his wisdom? In letting it alone. What then could move our author to write his Scale? I leave him to answer for that: for since all that can be known concerning God, his attributes, and the duties resulting from them, must be learnt from revelation; and since our mere reason is too feeble to scale the spiritual world without one, I leave our author to account for the rashness of his attempt. Had he not mistaken the weakness of his abilities for their vigour, he had paid more respect to that revelation by which he knows the little he does know. This mistake prompts him to ask what God is, in page 6? He answers, 'God is a spirit, perfectly
' holy; infinite in wisdom and knowledge, in power, and in presence; necessary and eternal in his
' existence; and unchangeable in his blessedness.' In page 13, 'Did you not add, in your conceptions
' of God, that his blessedness is unchangeable? Yes;
' he, the father of lights, hath no variableness, nor
' shadow of change; from everlasting to everlasting he is God; he changeth not: he ONLY has im-
' mortality.' Unless our author, under the idea of the blessedness of God includes all his perfections,

he has granted more to that attribute of the Deity in the latter, than in the former question. If he means that as a general attribute, then the unchangeableness of God must reach to his purpose: of which, our author has said nothing in his Scale. What he means, matters not: for it is not his meaning, but the truth, I am concerned about; nor do I believe he knows his own meaning: be that as it will; unchangeableness is an attribute of Deity: therefore his purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, Isa. xlvi. 10. xl. 14. liii. 10. Luke xii. 23. Eph. i. 5, &c. Cyrus shall execute it too. Isa. xlv. 28. Is God changeable? No. A changeable being is an imperfect being. If man was perfect, he would be unchangeable: why does he change his purpose? because he is not perfect, not infinite in wisdom and power. If he had infinite knowledge to foresee and contrive, and infinite power to execute, no accident could befall him: what could make him changeable? for changeability is founded on ignorance and weakness: both incompatible to Deity. In page 6, he says 'God is a spirit.' How does he know that? it is an inference from scripture, but not a scripture proposition, which he insists upon from his antagonist elsewhere. John iv. 24. reads in the original, "The Spirit, the God." And though I stumble at nothing in this answer, but his infinite presence; yet I say it is imperfect, and given in favour of his own system: for though he raves at systems in others, he has a wild one of his own. In the same page, 'What mean you by saying, God is a Spirit?' Here he comes in with his negatives, and cannot tell: but goes too far, by saying there is nothing in nature to which we can compare or liken God. Here is the source of our author's want of common sense: his leaving nature out; and attempting to reason without revelation: but though *we* may not devise symbols or similitudes

tudes in nature to compare God to, we may use
 those HE has devised for us: for he has given us in-
 numerable types, similitudes or material images, to
 give us conceptions of himself: nor does the fourth
 command at all controul this. The scriptures com-
 pare God to fire, and his appearances were frequent-
 ly in fire; the nature and root of which, it is pre-
 sumed, Mr. Fleming does not understand. Fire is
 the symbol of the Deity, Deut. iv. 24. He re-
 vealed himself in fire, Isa. vi. 4. Ezek. i. 4. Rev.
 i. 14. Psa. xviii. 12, 13, 14. and will appear in fire
 at his second coming, 2 Theff. i. 8. "A fiery
 " stream issued, and came forth from before him,
 " Dan. vii. 10." Christ is compared to fire, Mal.
 iii. 2. The Holy Ghost is compared to it, Matth.
 iii. 11. and descended in the form of fire, Acts ii. 3.
 Jehovah led the Israelites in their journey through
 the wilderness, under the form of fire, Exod. xiii.
 21. Jehovah that was in the pillar of fire in the
 foregoing chapter is called the agent Jehovah, that
 is Christ Jesus, chap. xix. 19. It is to be observed,
 that the name Jehovah cannot, without the greatest
 blasphemy, be applied to any, but to a self-existent
 person: but the name is in a multitude of places ap-
 plied to Christ; therefore he must be properly a di-
 vine person, and self-existent. The son of Shelo-
 mith debated with a man of Israel in the camp, and
 cursed יהוה שם Shem, Jehovah, and was put to
 death, Lev. xxiv. 10. What was his crime? Blas-
 phemy. Against whom? Shem, Jehovah; the
 Agent Jehovah, Christ Jesus. I could multiply in-
 stances here, and give ample proof; but have not
 room. When our author, or any of the learned
 junto dispute this, I will shew them their ignorance:
 for neither physics nor metaphysics, rabbinical nor
 Greek learning will help them; nor will their fit-
 nefs fit here. This will be an heavier millstone to
 sink their escalada, than Mr. Fleming has, or can
 hang

hang upon the neck of the assembly's catechism. Fire fell from heaven upon the vicarious sacrifices to Jehovah, as a mark of his approbation, Gen. xv. 17. Lev. ix. 24. Judges xiii. 20. 2 Chron. vii. 1. 1 King xviii. 38, &c. &c. Christ and his glory is compared to the light, 2 Sam. xxi. 17. Isa. x. 17. lx. 19. Matth. xvii. 2. John i. 4, 7, 9. iii. 19, 20, 21. viii. 12. ix. 5. xii. 35. 1 John i. 5. Rev. xxi. 23. The Holy Ghost is compared to the wind (spirit) Cant. iv. 16. John iii. 8. Acts ii. 2. If those are not comparisons from nature, types, I know not what to call them, and ten thousand more. In some following pages he is a new kind of Pytho-nist, and speaks no man knows what, unless he had told us where to learn the duties prescribed in them. In page 9, he mistakes God's contempt of heathen, uninstituted sacrifices for a contempt of his own institutions : ignorance with a witness. In page 24, it would have been kind to have told us, what he means by space. It is an heathen unmeaning word, which he cannot explain, unless he can tell us what NOTHING is. Space is dimension ; the dimension of a body, not a void. It is a pagan word, substituted in our translation for רוּחַ (spirit) which אֵשׁ, with the אֵל light, and the אֵשׁ fire, fills the orb of material nature, the heavens, the world ; so that God is the filler of what our author improperly calls space : and all that can be inferred from his answer, is, that the universe is not God. A very great truth. In page 13, he will have it that his knowledge comes from reason ; whereas Adam must have had his intirely from revelation : for he was not created till the sixth day, when the system was finished and complete, therefore could have given no account without revelation ; and but for that could not know that it had not been eternal. The general laws of nature are too obscure to our author, for him to draw conclusions from, page 14, or else he had

had not, page 15 talked of other worlds. What other worlds? Where are they? What business have they in a catechism? I like his answer to his 34th question extremely; he has taken the old testament into his canon. Here his account of the consequences of Adam's sinning is extremely lame, unless he had told us how his posterity became sinful, as well as how they became mortal: the source of mortality we know. I was in hopes Mr. Fleming would have embellished his system, with an account of the origin of moral evil; it is deficient without it, yet there is not a word about it: I have no business with it, for I am not writing a system. His 40th question puzzles me, it is a jumble I do not understand. Question 42, he evades the end of Christ's death, by giving a brief history of his life: the scriptures say, he died a ransom for the world, to save men from the slavery of sin, and from hell, to redeem depraved sinners, to set them at liberty to serve God with the whole delight of their hearts, to burst the bonds of sin and death, and hell, and save them for ever who could not save themselves; Rom. v. 10. Mr. Fleming says, we are saved by his doctrine, precept, and example: The scriptures say, we are saved by his death. Indeed he, question 44, brings in his blood, but so obscurely, one cannot tell for what; for if we are saved by following his example, &c. what need of his blood? Here Mr. Fleming steps in and tells us, it is to be our propitiation, as he has taught us to propitiate for ourselves, by repentance and new obedience: wonderful indeed, that the blood of Christ Jesus, the Creator, Redeemer, and preserver of the world, should have just energy enough to enable us to propitiate for ourselves*, and not energy enough to

* If our author is offended at the strength of these epithets, I will be accountable.

to propitiate for us ; a pretty fine-spun piece of popery this : I hope our author will never more call himself a Protestant. He comes in, question 45, with a succedaneum, penitence, and affirms, that ‘ God always pardons the penitent ;’ and if he means any thing, he means without any propitiation : presently contradicts this, by saying, Christ gave his life a ransom, &c. In the next succeeding pages, he is so confounded, confused, denying, affirming, evading, shifting, and shuffling, that I defy him to explain his own ideas : he talks of sincerity, defines faith away, depreciates the prophetic office of Christ, making him a mere delegate ; cyphers his priesthood, and sinks it into an allusive character, consisting in his putting an end to all bloody sacrifices ; and a great deal more such like unintelligible stuff : presently, says he, he lives for ever to make intercession for us, and that he is able to save to the uttermost ; that his being seated at the right hand of God, gives encouragement to christians, &c. yet sinks his kingly office and cyphers that too, and strips it of every spiritual prerogative, and forgets that it consists principally in conquering sin and the Devil, subduing our wills, making us free subjects in his kingdom, &c. The decalogue it should seem, was made for courts of judicature, and not for the conscience ; for the outward actions : who told him this, or how he picked it up, I cannot conceive. His account of the decalogue should have passed as below notice, had he not made it a compend of the law of nature. Can he tell us what the law of nature is ? No, he cannot ; the wild ass of the wilderness had he language could do it better, for he has a law of nature, but the rational creature has not. If God has given us power to believe, repent, and obey his commandments, as Mr. Fleming affirms, what have we to pray for ? For if so, we have all

we want, and would we have more? If we are thus spiritually athletic, we want no name of Christ, redemption, propitiation, mediation, nor any thing more than we have; a power to believe, obey, or repent, and be pardoned: but the very nature of prayer bespeaks insufficiency, depravity, and want. He next explodes the whole scripture, except the four gospels, or one of them; the next step it is presumed, he will explode the gospels too; for he will expound them his own way or else ——— But hark you, Mr. Fleming, who made you Pope, thus dogmatically to settle the canon of Scripture? This is no protestant, nay, it is no christian action or principle; for Christ himself appeals to the old testament as authentic; but Mr. Fleming knows better. I hope he will have the modesty to blush here; if not, every good christian will blush for him.

As I want room, I must comprize the remainder in interrogatories.—If the church be founded only on the new testament, as page 42, how then on the foundation of the prophets and apostles? Since you are a good catholic yourself, is it not unkind to exclude the Pope and his clergy from the church? If we have, as you say, but one rule of faith, the scriptures; and reason be the infallible rule to judge of that rule; methinks we have two rules here: Do, Sir, explain this riddle, or the Sorbonne will laugh at you. Why follows that bold stroke at the gospels, to confound them with tradition, and render them only credible? page 43, 44; And why follows a compliment on the scriptures? Is not your Scale more useful? If it be not, take it away, what is it good for? Why is not the form of baptizing, celebrated in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as well understood now, as it was of old? Is it not

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because you have obscured it, as you have done christianity and the Scriptures? Why are you not more distinct in explaining how your acknowledgement of redemption and remission of sins, by the blood of Christ, comports with the rest of your Scale? Tell us, can a man worthily partake of the Eucharist, without faith? And whether your manner of handling that doctrine, would not tempt one to think he could? Why, since reason is the infallible judge of scripture, are we to judge of doctrines by scripture, and not by our infallible reason? Why this round-about method? Cannot our infallible reason judge of doctrines, without that medium? Surely you think it can. Why this dust in our eyes then? Is the resurrection and the judgment only credible? are they not certain? If men may expect the awful judgment with composure, by a supreme love of God, and a generous affection to all men, without faith in Christ; wherefore then think you, came Christ into the world? Might not we have done very well without him? Aye, and without his revelation too. This, Sir, I take to be the purport of your Scale, and now let me ask you in the name of common sense, whether we may not think Gunter's is a better? many a mariner has with the use of that, safely crossed a pathless and tempestuous ocean, while many a christian will by the use of yours (if he uses it) lose his way and stumble in the dark, by your endeavouring to reduce every thing to a deistical uncertainty. If we are fools, you are at liberty to let us alone, and keep at what distance you please: why should our stupidity offend a man of your vigorous virtue? You are at liberty to pray for us too, and notwithstanding your bloated merit renders it needless, we will pray for you. Now Sir, if your efficient self thinks this ill treatment, it shall give me

me no concern ; I have followed your own delicate pattern, without hating or wishing you ill, for I know not your person. Suffer a piece of advice and I have done ; keep your pen quiet, aim not at things too high for you, nor meddle any more with things nature seems not to have form'd you for.

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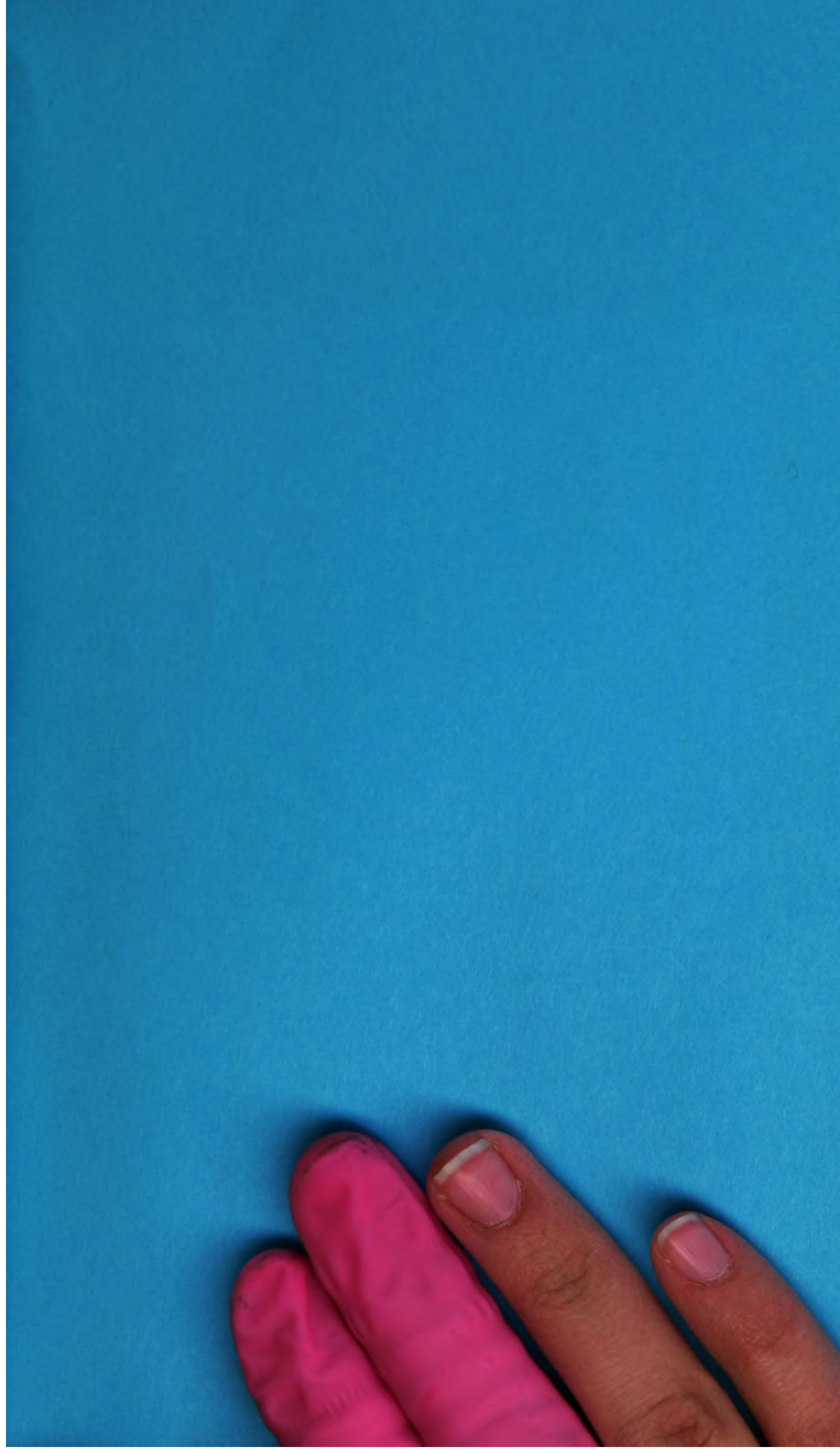
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JOHN BARROW

ESQ.

OF THE

ARMY

AND

OF THE

NAVY

LONDON

Dove, John

Remarks upon a Pamphlet written by the Rev. Caleb Heming in a letter of
admonition ...

London 1756

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